

# Seattle Light Rail Review Panel

## Meeting Notes for September 6, 2000

### Agenda Items

- LRRP Business
- Update on Lander and Royal Brougham stations

### Commissioners Present

Rick Sundberg  
Matthew Kitchen  
Paul Tomita

### Staff Present

Deborah Ashland, Sound Transit  
Marty Curry, Planning Commission  
Barbara Goldstein, Arts Commission  
Sue Kelly, CityDesign  
John Rahaim, CityDesign  
Cheryl Sizov, CityDesign

Rick Sundberg chaired the meeting. The meeting opened with introductions of the Commissioners, staff and guests. A short discussion was held regarding LRRP business. A proposal for a joint meeting between the Design Commission and Link Rail Review Panel was suggested to discuss the Third Avenue entrance of the new City Hall building, however, no date was set for this meeting. Rick Sundberg then invited Sound Transit and consultants to proceed with the briefings.

### Briefing on Lander and Royal Brougham Stations

*John Owen, Makers*

*Brian Stenburg, Streeter and Associates*

To bring the panel up-to-date the consultants began with a short summary of the sites. The area between the two stations is an industrial area and the neighborhood plan is to keep it as such. These stations face the challenge of being accessible and visible from the street because they are situated back from the streets and are visually blocked by the surrounding buildings. In order to make these areas more "people friendly", the consultants are approaching the design as one whole segment with two stations that transition gracefully to one another. The E3 busway trail and the Mountains to Sound trail are also good bicycle and pedestrian connections at these stations.

Changes in design to the Lander Station have been made since the last review due to Metro considerations. The entrance to the Lander station was moved north of Lander by 80-feet so that a third traffic lane would be made for buses that need get around the lanes with the bus stops. Due to this change, the southbound bus stop will be at the south end of the platform (south of Lander) and the passengers transferring from buses to rail will have to walk approximately 600-feet north to the station entrance. The proposal for the pedestrian overpass are no longer being considered due to the passing of I-695, there is no funding for an overpass at this time.

### Aspects of Urban Design Reflected in Station Designs

Visibility of the stations from the street are restricted due to the area's buildings and that the Lander Station is situated 280-feet from the street and Royal Brougham is situated 150-feet from the street. Plans are to use some sort of light pillars or sculptures at the street area to draw attention of pedestrians to the station entrances. The predominate color in the neighborhood areas is grey, so the consultants

would like to accent the station structures with colors such as red and yellow. However, Sound Transit's official colors are a deep blue and light gray.

The stations will be simple in structure design. Canopy coverage of the station platforms will be 30% at Lander and 50% at Royal Brougham. Complete coverage could be added at a later time. The ticket vending machines will be under the canopies and there will be a windscreen on both sides of this area for protection from the weather. To reduce the "raw area" on the facing, they plan to add some sort of signage. Lighting fixtures are at each end of the canopy structures. The power of the lighting will be 8-10 foot candles, maintaining the maximum light at the ends of platform. The design of the canopy is simple at the base, becoming more detailed and intricate with the arms under the canopy, establishing a series of major and minor rhythms that echo, in spirit, the refinement of raw materials to finished product that occurs in manufacturing. The concept of lantern or beacon is being pursued as a way of signifying to pedestrians where the stations are.

Surfaces for the station platforms are still in the design phase, they are considering various checkerboard patterns to guide people through the station. In order to keep pedestrians from crossing over the tracks, there will be fencing to block the tracks. This fencing at the station area will be an architectural feature, probably a steel fence designed by an artist, while the fencing between the stations will be chain-link. At the edge of the platform near the track a yellow warning line will be present and the surface near the tracks will probably be a black rubber mat, these materials and color choices are still under consideration.

Pedestrian crossings at the Lander Station do not have a consistent edge with the sidewalks; this aspect of design is still being worked on. At Royal Brougham there is a consistent edge with the sidewalks, and the surface is at-grade with the exception of the bus loading area; a ramp in this area will keep it in ADA compliance.

Steve Mah, Seatran, briefed the panel on the City's permit review comments on the design at 30% completion stating that the major issue is passenger safety. After reviewing Metro's needs, they were able to increase the sidewalk by 17½- feet at the Royal Brougham station, however the bike paths are narrower than normal. The City maintains the right-of-way at the cross streets. There is an effort to site an artwork somewhere in or near the light rail corridor, which so far hasn't found a suitable site—Seatran is opposed to any site in the right-of-way which might later be needed for transportation purposes. Lastly, railroad crossing gates are still under consideration.

### Discussion

- What types of materials would be used for the windscreens? *(We're considering using laminated glass and either steel or aluminum for the structures.)*
- What is the southbound bus stop distance at Lander? *(500+ feet) That's seems too far to walk for bus/rail transfers. (The morning/northbound transfer is a short one, but yes the ride home entails a longer walk—unless people eventually choose to transfer at Royal Brougham when that station is built.)*
- Can you take more right-of-way? *(No, because of the railroad. And Metro has insisted on having having the third lane for passing buses. On the other hand, if the funding is found for the construction of the Royal Brougham station, the consultants believe that Royal Brougham will be the southbound transfer station and the issues of the 600-foot walk at Lander will be a moot point.)*
- If the bus/rail connections are important, are we building Lander first and Royal Brougham second? Also, will the artists be involved in the design of these columns/colonnade? *(Yes, artists will be involved. The light columns proposed will be at least 15-feet high, so that they are visible outside*

*of the station area. What the panel was shown were just "place holders", the consultants are meeting with the artist in the next week to discuss the design.)*

- I suggest that this lighting element also wrap outside of the station area to draw attention of pedestrians/passengers to the location of station entrance.
- Will the columns echo the form of the canopy supports or be different? *(Not sure yet.)*
- Balancing the monumental scale you need to make the station visible, with the human-scale you need to make it welcoming is a real challenge. We need to see more human-scale detailing in the next review.
- You have done a good job relating to the industrial context in the architecture, so perhaps let the art not be industrial. Also, lanterns don't have to be same at both stations. Stay open to other rhythms with columns.
- There is good potential for landscaping, especially at the Royal Brougham stations.
- This context is challenging for a pedestrian—freeway ramps, chain-link fencing. How will you accommodate people in this?
- The area likely to experience the most congestion is the ticket vending, so place landscaping further down the length of the plaza. *(But ramps are overhead—what grows under ramps?)*
- The poor connection with Metro buses is troubling. It would seem that the priorities are misplaced if we aren't putting a premium on making light rail and buses work as a seamless system. I question the need for that third lane.
- How many bus lines run through there? I recommend another look at this and that LRRP prepare a letter to Metro.
- Black rubber for crossing the tracks is not good for older or visually-impaired people. *(We are working with the blind community on this.)*
- So are you try to say that conceptually the station covers the whole block? Or that the columns are the entry point? If so, they need to be wrapped around to the intersection to draw people to the station. Getting to the pedestrian island is the problem. *(Using landscaping and large trees at key entry intersections should help with this.)*
- We'll want to see more of the artist's work on these. Let's also more on Sound Transit's proposed color palette.
- What about benches? *(Because of anticipated crowds, we'll be placing limited benches at Royal Brougham, but will provide windscreens. There will be about 40 feet of benches at Lander per platform. Not sure if we'll use an actual bench or extruded paving/concrete.)*
- I like the version of the canopy with the arms down, but would then elevate it.
- I agree.
- I like the arms up version, but the design seems complicated to hold it up, so therefore I am inclined toward arms down as a simpler, more straightforward design solution. Also, given the industrial nature of awnings, is there a way to simplify the design in order to "buy" more coverage? 30-50% isn't much. I am skeptical that additional canopy will ever be purchased at a later date. *(I agree with your skepticism, but keep in mind that all the stations have 380 feet of platform whether passenger loads ever meet that or not. Volumes may never reach that amount here.)*
- I'm not suggesting full coverage—just a little more.
- The arms up design is nicely detailed, but all the detail is above and too high for pedestrians to appreciate it.
- The ticket vending needs work—it would be preferable not to look at the back of the machines from outside the platform.
- Where is bicycle storage? *(Twelve lockers for 24 bicycles at Lander, plus another 40+ at Royal Brougham.)*

- Is design of the transition structure part of these stations? We would like to see it. *(It is part of the E3 contract, but we aren't accenting this transition structure or doing anything other than a standard MSC wall.)*
- Will station amenities be a uniform treatment at all stations? *(Maybe, unless they are art elements in themselves.)*
- I thought there would be more detail at 60% completion than we are seeing today.

**Recommendation**

***The Panel thanks the consultants for a thorough presentation and recommends approval of the schematic designs pending further development and another Panel review of the following elements:***

- ***Integration of the art into the architectural design, especially with respect to the pylons/columns marking entries;***
- ***Canopy design options further refined, with the consultant's preference stated;***
- ***Presentation of portions of the structure without canopies; and***
- ***More information on station and amenities and detailing including benches, paving, materials, color, railings, fencing, ticket vending, and windscreens.***

***The Panel further requests that staff prepare a letter to Metro regarding poor bus/rail connections, with a copy of meeting minutes attached.***

The meeting adjourned at 5:57 PM.